

Farmers Market Vendor Survey Analysis and Conclusions

Vendor Participation in Farmers Markets

The largest number of responses was from the Saturday and Tuesday market vendors. 56.5% Northampton vendors also vend at other farmers markets in the region outside of Northampton. Vendors tend to participate for a majority of the time or for the entire season the markets operate. Vendors tend to be either fairly new to the markets or long time vendors with 61% of respondents vending at a Northampton market for under 5 years and 35% vending for more than 15 years.

Location and Size of Farms

Most vendors at the Northampton markets have farms located outside of Northampton in Hampshire and Franklin counties on either farms with 10 acres or less or farms over 50 acres. Vendors are primarily established farms with 78% of farms in operation for more than 6 years and 48% for more than 15 years.

Farm and Market Income

The majority (52.4%) of farmer's household income is more than 75% derived from agricultural activities. A majority (62.5%) of vendors farmers market sales are increasing. Another 21.7% are stable. 13% are decreasing (it would be interesting to know which vendors these are to see if there is a trend in purchasing/product preferences or to learn if there is a way to assist these vendors).

Products Sold at the Markets

59.1% Vegetables Fruits
45.5% Fruits
31.8% Plants
31.8% Cut flowers
27.3% Eggs
22.7% Meat
18% Prepared foods

Desirability of Market/City Collaboration

The majority of respondents found the prospect of collaboration on the following activities either very or somewhat desirable:

90% Improved coordination and streamlined permitting
89% Improved marketing
78% Improved police presence
78% Expanded space to operate
76% Improved market management
72% Develop clear City policies and procedures for market operations
63% Expanded hours of operation

Sufficient Consumer Demand to Support New Activities

A clear majority of vendors believe there is sufficient consumer demand to support the following activities:

- 52% More space at each market
- 67% More diversity of agricultural products
- 59% More ready-to-eat prepared foods
- 62% More locally prepared foods to take home

New Activities that Would be Helpful to the Vendor

A clear majority of vendors believe the following activities at individual markets would be helpful to their business.

- 50% Extended seasons at the Saturday and Tuesday markets (this was only 2 respondents for each market)
- 80% Longer hours at the Saturday market (4 responses)

Please note that the total universe of respondents was only 23 vendors making it hard to draw clear conclusions.